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NOYES RECEIVES HONORARY DOCTORATE FROM UNIVERSITY OF TARTU IN ESTONIA



Mershon affiliate **Dorothy Noyes**, professor of English and Comparative Studies and former director of the Center for Folklore Studies, was awarded an honorary doctorate in folkloristics at the **99th Anniversary Celebration** of the University of Tartu in Estonia on December 1, 2018.

Currently serving as president of the American Folklore Society, Noyes was recognized for contributions to international folkloristics and for fruitful collaborations with Tartu's Department of Estonian and Comparative Folklore.

Noyes' ethnographic and historical research addresses the traditional public sphere in Romance-speaking Europe; she also writes on folklore theory and on the international policy careers of culture concepts.

"Dorothy Noyes is a highly esteemed scholar of festival and political performance and an outstanding specialist in folklore theory and history," the **university announcement** said. "Fluent in Catalan, French, Spanish and Italian, she has conducted extensive research on and in Catalonia and western Europe more broadly. Her path-breaking research, which combines folklore studies with insights drawn from political science and international relations, has opened up new opportunities for scholars interested in exploring expressive culture as a means of agency in diverse contexts, past and present."

Noyes is the author of *Fire in the Plaça: Catalan Festival Politics After Franco* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); *Humble Theory: Folklore's Grasp on Social Life* (Indiana University Press, 2016); and *Sustaining Interdisciplinary Collaboration: A Guide for the Academy*, with Regina F. Bendix and Kilian Bizer (University of Illinois Press, 2017). Her current book project is *Exemplary Failures: Gesture and Pedagogy in Liberal Politics*.

Elected fellow of the American Folklore Society in 2005, Noyes was named president-elect in 2017, president in 2018-19, and past president in 2020. She spent six years on the executive board of the Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore, and has lectured or taught in 15 countries.



Her interdisciplinary projects have included a six-year stint as fellow of the Göttingen Interdisciplinary Working Group on Cultural Property. Among her courses are American Regional Cultures in Transition, Cultures of Waste and Recycling, Cultural Diplomacy, and Poetry and Politics in the 20th Century Mediterranean.

Founded in 1632 and refounded in 1919 as Estonia's national university, the University of Tartu ranks in the top 1.2 percent worldwide and third overall in the post-Soviet countries, according to the QS World University Rankings.

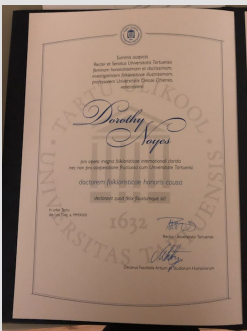
In addition to many teaching and research interchanges, three of the Tartu department's junior faculty members have spent time at Ohio State: Elo-Hanna Seljamäa earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Studies in 2012; Anastasiya Astapova and Margaret Lyngdoh each spent their dissertation year as a visiting scholar at the Center for Folklore Studies.

The two folklore programs are working toward further collaborations in their shared specialties, including political folklore and the oral traditions of highland Asia.

Noyes attended Indiana University for her bachelor's degree in English (1983) and earned her master's degree (1987) and doctoral degree (1992) at the University of Pennsylvania, where she studied in the Department of Folklore and Folklife under the eminent folklorist Roger D. Abrahams.

Besides Noyes, awards at the University of Tartu 99th Anniversary Celebration included honorary doctor of law on Kåre Lilleholt of the University of Oslo, honorary doctor in medicine on Ilpo Tapani Huhtaniemi of University of Turku and Imperial College London, and honorary doctor of geography on Frank Witlox of Ghent University.

Story by Cathy Becker. Photos courtesy of Dorothy Noyes. Right click and open in a new tab to see larger versions.



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